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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 /078 W
----------043231 160659Z /21
R 141720Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6137
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, SP, IT
SUBJECT: ANDREOTTI VISIT

REF: MADRID 10332

1. OUR SEPARATE SOUNDINGS WITH THE SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTRY AND THE ITALIAN EMBASSY HAVE ADDED LITTLE TO THE INFORMATION REPORTED REFTEL. BOTH SOURCES SAID THAT THERE WERE NO BILATERAL PROBLEMS OF ANY CONSEQUENCE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THAT IN THE ATMOSPHERICS SURROUNDING THE VISIT LAY ITS SUBSTANCE. FOREIGN MINISTRY'S EUROPEAN DIRECTOR SAID THAT ANDREOTTI TOOK PAINS TO REITERATE ITALY'S FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD SPAIN'S EC
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ENTRY, BUT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT WHEN NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN, THE ITALIANS WOULD NOT BE TOUGH. ITALIAN EMBASSY DCM REVIEWED ANDREOTTI'S THEMES ON THIS SUBJECT BY SAYING THAT IN THE ITALIAN VIEW THERE WOULD BE NEAR-TERM TECHNICAL -- MEANING ECONOMIC -- PROBLEMS BUT OVER THE LONG TERM ITALY'S "STRATEGIC INTERESTS" WOULD BE SERVED BY THE PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY OF A MAJOR INDUSTRIAL DEMO-

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CRACY WITH MEDITERRANEAN ATTITUDES AND PROBLEMS.

2. WHILE PRESS BACKGROUNDING GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IN THE FUTURE MINISTERIAL VISITS WOULD BE INSTITUTIONALIZED, BOTH FOREIGN MINISTRY AND ITALIAN EMBASSY SAID THAT BEYOND A HOPE THAT THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS MIGHT BE ABLE TO MEET TWICE A YEAR, THERE WAS LITTLE NEW. CONTRARY TO SOME REPORTS, THE ITALIANS DID NOT INVITE THE SPANISH INTERIOR MINSTER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VIENNA MEETING OF THE FRENCH, GERMAN, SWISS, AUSTRIAN AND ITALIAN MINISTERS. INSTEAD, THE SPANISH INTERIOR MINISTER WILL CONTINUE TO CONSULT HIS FRENCH AND ITALIAN COLLEAGUES ON A PURELY BILATERAL BASIS. ON TERRORISM, ITALIAN DCM BELIEVED THAT WHILE THERE MIGHT BE CONTACTS BETWEEN ITALIAN AND SPANISH TERRORIST GROUPS, THERE WAS LITTLE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE THESIS THAT THESE CONTACTS WERE EITHER SIGNIFICANT OR FREQUENT.

3. COMMENT: ANDREOTTI'S REPAYMENT OF SUAREZ' EARLIER ONE TO ROME, THE FIRST BY AN ITALIAN HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, MARKS ANOTHER STEP IN SPAIN'S COMING OF AGE IN EUROPE. IN ADDITION TO BOOSTING THE IMAGE OF THE SUAREZ GOVERNMENT AND ATTESTING TO SPAIN'S DEMOCRATIC ACCEPTABILITY, IT SHOWS ITS RAPIDLY GROWING IMPORTANCE IN WESTERN EUROPE. TODMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MADRID10632
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780377-0676
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780967/aaaacdas.tel
Line Count: 86
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MADRID 10332
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1434659
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ANDREOTTI VISIT
TAGS: PEPR, SP, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2d162250-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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